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The Mormon Problem.

By Walter M. Barrows.

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SALT LAKE CITY.

(*From the "New West"*)

The New West.

THE MORMON PROBLEM.

BY

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THE MORMON PROBLEM.

Utah is still a Territory, although for over twenty-five years Congress has been besieged with petitions to admit this Territory into the Union, under the name of "The State of Deseret." When Nevadá was admitted, with a population of 40,000, why should Utah be kept out, with a population of 130,000? Polygamy is the sufficient answer to this question. If it were not for polygamy, Utah would to-day be a State. The Mormon delegate to Congress, himself a polygamist, is doing all in his power to get Utah admitted with polygamy. If the people of the United States are not watchful, he will succeed; for he has the power to pledge the Mormon vote to any party that will procure them the rights of Statehood; and, in the exigences of party strife, the votes of two new Senators may be a prize too tempting for one party or the other to resist. But when Utah is once a State, the peculiar institutions of Mormonism will be placed beyond the reach of Congress; and, in the end, a bloody revolution may be needed to lop the excrescences of an Asiatic civilization that will then have been firmly engrafted on the body politic. Hence, it is very important that the people of the United States should be made aware of the schemes of the Mormon hierarchy, and should instruct their representatives in Congress to keep

AUERBACH COLL Dec. 1947

Utah a Territory until the people have adopted a constitution prohibiting polygamy.

But will the people of Utah, a large majority of whom are Mormons, ever consent to do this? Is there any change of sentiment in regard to polygamy observable among them? Are the agencies now at work sufficient to solve this vexed Mormon problem? I believe that they are, if time enough is given them; but, with their present force, it will require a long time. The work could be hastened vastly if Congress would assist the Liberal party of Utah with judicious legislation, and if the Christian people east and west of us would assist in increasing the number and efficiency of the reformatory agencies now at work.

It is my purpose in this article to describe these agencies, and to suggest how they may be strengthened.

THE GENTILES.

All persons not Mormons that come to Utah are stigmatized as Gentiles, and are looked upon and treated as intruders, who have no right to invade the Territory pre-empted by the Latter-Day Saints. And, from their point of view, the Mormon leaders are right in warning their followers to treat the Gentiles as enemies; for the very presence of this outside element has a disintegrating effect on their system. Mormonism is a plant that can grow only in a cellar. It cannot stand the light of day. Brigham Young was shrewd enough to recognize this fact. When he was crossing the plains, in search of a new home for his people, he was met by one of his elders, who had come overland from California, to report that that was a very rich country—just the place for the new settlement. But Brigham insisted on stopping in the secluded valleys of Utah; for he felt that, to build up "the kingdom," he must be isolated from the rest of the world.

At a later period he discovered, in the mountains near Salt Lake City, large quantities of iron pyrites, which he mistook for pure gold; but he refused to utilize this discovery himself, and commanded his people to keep it secret; for he knew that if it were noised abroad, a tide of Gentiles would pour in, and apostacy from the Mormon Church would begin.

Indeed, the first serious rupture in this church was occasioned by Godbe and Harrison, who published in their magazine an article advising their brethren to turn their attention to mining. But, on the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad, in 1869, the deluge came; and the result is showing that, while the Yankee Mahommed could build up his peculiar system in a Mecca of the desert, his system could not be maintained where freedom of thought and speech and action were allowed.

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For, although the Mormon Church is apparently as strong to-day as it has ever been, yet this is not really the case. Its numbers have been kept up by zealous proselyting among the lower classes of Europe; but the more intelligent and enterprising of its old members have apostatized. While some able leaders remain, most of these are lukewarm in the faith, and remain constant to the church simply from business considerations. They find it profitable to handle the tithing.

The first Mormon preachers were ignorant fanatics; but they were honest, and their words carried a weight that sincerity always carries, even in a bad cause. The preachers now have "the ravings of the sybil, but lack the inspiration." Their talk sounds hollow; the ring of sincerity is gone. When the present leaders pass away,— as they soon must, for most of them are old men,— who are to take their places? I have heard Mormons ask this question in tones of despair. There are none to fill their places. The young men feel no interest

in Mormonism as a system of religion, and when they get a little education they turn their backs on it completely. Polygamy, especially, is offensive to them. Many of them are the victims of this vicious system, and they are indignant at the wrong that has been done them in the holy name of religion. They are becoming sensitive to the opinion of the outside world; and that opinion harmonizes with the decision of the Federal Court, declaring that their mothers are but concubines. In Salt Lake City, where the Gentiles are most numerous, very few polygamous marriages now take place; and, if the liberalizing and Christianizing influences that have been at work in this city could be carried to every city and village in the Territory, the Mormon problem would practically be solved. But what is there in Utah to attract Gentile immigration? or, in other words, what are its elements of wealth?

RESOURCES OF UTAH.

The Territory of Utah is as large as all of New England, and nearly one-half of Old England besides. It lies between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierras. But this great intermural basin is itself a plateau, with its own system of mountains and valleys. The valleys are from 4,000 to 6,000 feet above the sea level, and the mountain ranges rise to over 13,000 feet high. They are thus so lofty that the moisture is stored away in them in the form of snow and ice, to be gradually melted by the summer's sun, coming down them in perennial streams, to water the plains below. The valleys are broad, and many of them exceedingly fertile, and are adapted to the raising of nearly all kinds of grain and almost every variety of fruit. The apple, the peach, the plum, the apricot and the vine flourish in the north, and the almond and the fig-tree in the south. But as the summers are long and dry, irrigation is

necessary, in most cases, to secure good crops. But this is no disadvantage; for, with irrigation, the farmer is sure of his crops, and can raise much more per acre than those can who depend directly on the clouds for their moisture. Indeed, the quantity of wheat that is raised here on an acre of ground, well-irrigated, is simply incredible. But as the country is developed, the amount of rain that falls increases, and large quantities of grain are now being raised without any artificial irrigation. It is true that there are large tracts of land in Utah that cannot be utilized at all for agricultural purposes, but these are well adapted to grazing. The grama grass, that is found in bunches on the mountain-sides and scattered over the arid-looking plains, is the best food in the world for cattle and sheep. Wool is already one of our chief articles of export, and considerable quantities are used at home, to supply the seven woolen-mills now running in this Territory.

But mining will always be the great industry of Utah. Gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, coal, salt and many other minerals are found in paying quantities. Probably there is no other portion of our country, of equal size, that is so rich in lead, iron and coal. Utah already stands first in the list of lead-producing States, and third in silver. But the iron and the coal will ultimately be our great sources of wealth. Our coal will make as good coke as that at Connellsville.

Mr. J. Blodgett Brittan, the Philadelphia ironmaster, writes of the magnitude of these deposits as follows: "I now hold the impression that these deposits are among the wonders of the world — are literally immense. If such coke as you sent me can be produced there in quantity, Utah's iron resources must exceed those of any other section of the Union." With cheap coal, iron and wool, Utah is certain to become a great manufacturing State; and the high freight rates will always be a

protective tariff to home industries. These facts are enough to show that Utah is very rich in material resources, and is capable of supporting a large population. But I would also call attention to the

CENTRAL POSITION OF UTAH.

A few years ago Utah was the most isolated portion of our country. It is now one of the most central; for it is on the great highway that runs through the land from east to west, and it will be on that other great highway that is to run through it from north to south, connecting Oregon and Mexico.

Any one who will look at President Tenney's admirable map, published in *The Home Missionary* for October, will see at once that Utah is exactly in the center of "The New West." It is not only the geographical center, but it is destined to be the commercial center of this vast region. The Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads run through the northern portion of the Territory. The Union Pacific has a branch road running south, over one hundred miles, with four narrow-gauge feeders extending out into the mining districts. The Utah Northern is being pushed rapidly for Montana, and is already finished to the Snake River, in Idaho. The great mineral wealth of Southern Utah will certainly draw thither the Southern Pacific. There is one mine now being developed in the 'Frisco District, that has $20,000,000 in lead and silver ore now in sight; and this alone will be a strong enough magnet to attract the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad, or one of its rivals, as soon as they cross the Rocky Mountains. Thus Utah is to become the ganglion of a network of railroads running out in every direction; and this alone will make it a center of great influence.

But what sort of influence will that be? We cannot fore-

cast the future; but this much, at least, is certain: this influence will not be wholesome, unless these new communities, during the formative period of their history, are leavened with the leaven of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Now is the time to plant Christian churches all over this new region. This work cannot safely be delayed. The let-alone principle is an unsound one to apply to Mormonism, or any system of evil. The teachers of error are aggressive; the teachers of the truth must be equally so. The Mormons must be converted from their errors, before they will make good American citizens; but this will not be done by simply letting them alone, nor by calling them hard names. It is true that their system is an anachronism, a relic of barbarism; but they must be convinced of this before they will leave it; and this can only be done by the slow process of education.

This is the work, then, that, as Christians, we are called upon to do; and we should enter upon it with earnestness, both for the sake of the victims of this superstition, and also for the sake of our common country. In this country we are all members one of another; and if one member suffers, every member will suffer. The virus of ignorance and superstition in Utah will make New England sick. Although the rich material resources of Utah may, in the end, attract so many Gentiles that we shall be able to out-vote the Mormons, yet even then, if they retain their present ideas, they will be a disturbing element.

But, while pleading for the Mormons, I would not forget the Gentiles. This class are exposed to peculiar temptations. They see such a travesty of religion in the Tabernacle, they see so many unholy things done in the name of religion, that they are apt to become averse to everything connected with religion. Then, too, most of them come to Utah simply to

make money; and they become so absorbed in this pursuit that at last they worship no God but Mammon. Even professing Christians, when they get out here, so far removed from the influences of home and church, are swept away by the prevailing current of worldliness, and make shipwreck of their faith. For the sake, then, of this class, we need to plant Christian institutions in Utah.

CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS.

Mission work in Utah very much resembles that in foreign lands, and similar methods should be adopted. The same reasons that influence the missionaries in Japan and India to start day-schools in connection with their church work will apply with equal force to Utah. We have no system of free schools. The Mormon leaders are opposed to all schools, though they have been obliged to open some in self-defence, to keep their children from flocking to the Gentile schools; but most of these are of a very inferior order, and are used to propagate the peculiar tenets of Mormonism. The teachers are required to indoctrinate their pupils with the absurdities of the Book of Mormon, and the puerilities of the Book of Doctrines and Covenants. The leaders know very well that after the children have been to our schools for a few months they are spoiled for Mormonism, and so they do all in their power to keep them away. But, notwithstanding the threatenings of the priesthood, the people will patronize the Gentile schools. A great interest in education is being awakened throughout the entire territory. The Christian missionary should regard this as a very encouraging sign of the times, and should at once take advantage of it.

We need a strong, energetic, devoted missionary in the southern part of this Territory, to organize day-schools, Sun-

day-schools and churches, and to take the general oversight of this branch of the work. He ought to have placed, subject to his orders, a dozen or more teachers, and sufficient funds to partly pay their salaries. A portion of the salary can be raised by tuition, but this must be supplemented from other sources. How can this money be raised? The funds of the American Home Missionary Society were not contributed for this purpose; but cannot a Woman's Board of Home Missions be organized to do this and similar work? I am glad to report that the first step in this general educational work has been taken in the founding of

THE SALT LAKE ACADEMY.

This unsectarian Christian Academy was incorporated under the laws of Utah, last July, and opened its doors, Sept. 9. Professor EDWARD BENNER, of Lowell, Mass., is Principal, and he has already exhibited rare qualifications for this position. We have now eighty pupils, and this number can be doubled by another year, if we can secure the teachers and other necessary equipments. An Eastern gentleman recently said that he regarded this as the most important educational enterprise inaugurated in the West for years. The future, I feel sure, will show that he has not overestimated its importance. It is needed to educate the youth of Salt Lake City, and is already attracting pupils from the surrounding towns. It is needed to educate teachers for the outlying districts. It is needed as an auxiliary to the Christian Church, in the work of regenerating Utah, and bringing it into harmony with the nineteenth century. A few years ago Utah was as completely closed to all civilizing agencies as China or Japan ever were; but now, in the providence of God, the wall has been broken down, and this vast region is an open field for the Christian worker.

Shall we not eagerly, thankfully, occupy it? True, it is a hard field, but, on this account, all the more important. A stranger, looking at one of our sage-brush deserts, might say, "It is impossible to raise anything there." But let him pull up the sage-brush and the grease-wood, and turn on the water, and he will have a garden. But the human laborer is needed to bring the water and the soil together. And so with the hearts of the people here: they seem hard and barren; but the Gospel of Christ, the water of life, can refresh and quicken them. And yet God has so ordered it that the human agent is needed to bring the two together. Who will come and engage in this work? "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them." "And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water."